

**Bianca, Pam**

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**From:** Brian Anderson <banderson@Council4.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 26, 2014 9:18 PM  
**To:** LABTestimony  
**Cc:** Matthew Brokman; Larry Dorman  
**Subject:** Test Lab com var - CEO comp,.doc

Please introduce into the record. Thanks.  
Brian Anderson



**Testimony before the Labor and Public Employees Committee, February 27, 2014**

Council 4 opposes S.B. No. 219, AN ACT CONCERNING THE MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEM CONTRIBUTION RATE. This bill hikes the employee pension contribution to a very high rate from its currently set statutory rate. At a time when most municipal employees have not seen a rise in their wages and have had to pay more for their health care, it would be very difficult for many of our members to pay more. We are aware that the recession raised the municipal share of the payment for MERS. With the stock market on the rebound, this increase should fall. We also oppose creating a multi-tiered pension system which has been discussed lately. Tiered pensions pit old workers against young workers and are unfair.

Council 4 supports S.B. No. 220, AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF LABOR HISTORY IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM. Labor history is vital for the understanding of democracy and how our economy works. This is an area of study which used to be taught and is now barely, if ever presented to students.

Council 4 supports S.B. No. 222, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFINITION OF MANAGERIAL EMPLOYEE. The United States has long advocated that the right to unionize is a basic human right.

Council 4 supports H.B. No. 5256 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE COMPENSATION OF WORKERS ON FAMILY HOLIDAYS. It is only fair to compensate employees who are forced to work on Thanksgiving and Christmas at a higher rate. Forcing employees, who are not needed for some essential service, to work on such holidays should come at a price.

Council 4 supports H.B. No. 5257 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES AND HOSPITAL CONVERSIONS. This is elaborated upon in other AFSCME testimony.

**Council 4 strongly supports H.B. No. 5280, AN ACT CONCERNING EXECUTIVE EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION.** U.S. Senator James Webb, a Vietnam War hero and Ronald Reagan's former secretary of the Navy said that "When I was in college, the average corporate CEO made 20 times what the average worker did; today it's nearly 400 times. Wages and salaries are at all time lows as a percentage of national wealth, even though the productivity of American workers is the highest in the world." He went on to say "the middle class of this country, our historic backbone and our best hope for a strong society in the future, is losing its place at the table." The decline of the middle class is one of the biggest problems that our state and country face. This bill tries to do something about that.

This bill simply states that a corporation would be ineligible for state grants or assistance if its CEO makes in excess of 50 times the wage of the corporation's average, full-time worker. We have experienced stagnant

wages for most workers since 2001. Personal savings for the average family have dried up. Workers are paying more for health care. Personal debt has skyrocketed. Personal bankruptcies and home foreclosures are at an all time high. Now that our economic numbers are approaching those akin to the "Great Depression" it is important for state government to act to try and preserve a decent life for the average working family. It is time for state government to act to try and save the consumption based economy that our society is built upon. The premise of that economy is that every working family should have a shot at the American Dream: a house, nothing fancy; a chance to send a child to college; a pension for the age when a person is too old and worn out to work.

This bill fosters a stronger link between a CEO and his workers. It provides an incentive for CEOs to care about the fate of the families working for them. Sadly, this type of legislation is needed to buck the aforementioned trends. Of course no corporation is forced to apply for state assistance, so this is an extremely mild bill, though no doubt it will be portrayed as radical by those who act as spokespeople for corporate management that has run amok.

Council 4 supports H.B. No. 5281, AN ACT CONCERNING MEMBERS OF THE DISABILITY RETIREMENT BOARD. This bill adds medical professionals who are knowledgeable about "sick building" syndrome to the board.

Council 4 supports H.B. No. 5283, AN ACT CONCERNING EXPANSION OF FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE. This bill expands FMLA leave to include the care of grandparents, grandchildren and parents in law. This bill recognizes the state of modern families. Many grandparents are raising grandchildren and are often their sole guardians. With most families requiring multiple bread winners to stay economically afloat, this bill is essential.